

# Many Cultures, Many Changes

## Purpose

Students will describe major cultural characteristics of regions in Europe and the Western Hemisphere; and they will compare and contrast cultural patterns, such as language, religion, and ethnicity, in various parts of Europe; the Caribbean; and North, South, and Central America.

## Materials

*For the teacher:* wall map of the world

*For the students:* copy of Black Line Master (BLM) *What's Happening Here?*, pencil

## Activity

### A. We Are the World

1. Pull down the wall map of the world. Point out each region as it is discussed during the activity.
2. Say to students: "The world is made up of people from many different cultures, who do things in many different ways. There are many different religions, occupations, types of food, clothes, music, and ways of accomplishing the same tasks." Ask students to name several different cultures and some aspects of each.
3. Explain that recently, people in different parts of the world who were once isolated from one another have started to share more information. Explain that this change was largely a result of better technology, such as air travel and electronic and digital communication.
4. Tell students: "There are many different cultural characteristics of peoples in Europe and the Americas, a few of which we will examine."

### B. Many Cultures, Many Changes

1. Give students a brief overview of the general cultures in the following regions in the Western Hemisphere: western and central Europe, southeastern Europe, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Canada (e.g., religions, economic trends, languages, decolonizations, cultural conflicts).
2. Ask students periodically to volunteer information that they already know about these regions of the world or about specific countries or cities in these regions.

## Technology Literacy Standards

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1	X	X	X	X		X	X
2	X	X	X				X
3	X		X				X
4		X				X	
5							
6		X		X		X	
7							
8						X	
9						X	
10							
11				X			
12							
13				X			
14							
15				X			
16							

☒ = This Technology Literacy Standard is addressed in this lesson.

☐ = This Technology Literacy Standard is not addressed in this lesson.

3. Ask students: “What patterns do you notice about these cultural characteristics?” Encourage students to notice cultural aspects and to think about why these might be so (e.g., why Portuguese is the language spoken in Brazil, while Spanish is spoken in the rest of South America).

### C. What’s Happening Here?

1. Give each student a copy of the BLM *What’s Happening Here?* and a pencil.
2. Ask students to select a country in Europe or the Western Hemisphere, excluding the United States, and conduct research about that country.
3. Tell students that they will use their research to answer the questions on the BLM.
4. After students have completed their research, have them present the information about the country they studied to the rest of the class.
5. As students present their research, encourage them to compare and contrast cultural aspects of their country with other countries by asking questions, such as: “Why is this tradition practiced only in this country? Where else is this religion common?”


## Questions for Review


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### Basic Concepts and Processes

As students discuss cultures in Europe and the Western Hemisphere, ask them questions such as:

 Why are some aspects of European culture so widespread?

 How do you think people reacted to having another culture forced on them, such as native peoples of the Americas being forced to follow European customs?

 Why do some people in South America belong to the Catholic Church and participate in traditional native ceremonies?

 Why would some Canadians in Quebec want to secede from Canada?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

**Directions: Research a country in Europe or the Americas (not the United States) and answer the questions listed below.**

1. What is one major current issue in this country?

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2. What is the primary religion practiced in this country?

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3. What is the official language spoken in this country?

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4. What type of government does this country have?

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5. What are some of the foods eaten in this country?

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6. How do most people earn a living in this country?

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7. What culture or cultures are most people in this country descended from?

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8. What are some ways that the culture of this country is changing?

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

## Teacher Directions

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Give each student a copy of the BLM *What's Happening Here?* and a pencil. Ask students to select a country in Europe or the Western Hemisphere, excluding the United States, and conduct research about that country. Tell students that they will use their research to answer the questions on the BLM.

After students have completed their research, have them present the information about the country they studied to the rest of the class.

## Answer Key

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Answers will vary.